

SJBC Curriculum Termly Plan: Y12 Politics– UK Government

Term	Topic(s) and links to other subjects	Core Knowledge	Core Vocabulary	Assessment	Resources
Autumn 1		1. The UK Constitution has evolved through key historical documents such as the Magna Carta (1215), Bill of Rights (1689), Act of Settlement (1701), Acts of Union (1707), and the Parliament Acts (1911 and 1949), establishing foundational principles like limited monarchy, parliamentary sovereignty, and individual rights. 2. The UK Constitution is uncodified (not written in a single document), unentrenched (can be changed by a simple act of Parliament), and unitary (centralised authority); it rests on two core principles: parliamentary sovereignty and the rule of law. 3. The five main sources of the UK Constitution are: (1) statute law (laws passed by Parliament), (2) common law (legal precedents), (3) conventions (unwritten practices), (4) authoritative works (such as Erskine May), and (5) treaties (including EU agreements and international law).	1. Constitution: A set of rules and principles that outlines how a country is governed, including the powers of government, the rights of citizens, and how laws are made. 2. Unentrenched: A constitution that can be easily changed by a simple act of Parliament. (Opposite: Entrenched – harder to change, often requiring special procedures or majorities.) 3. Uncodified: A constitution that is not written in a single document but found in many sources like laws, conventions, and court rulings. (Opposite: Codified – written in one single document.) 4. Unitary: A system where power is held by the central government, and any local powers are granted and controlled by it. (Opposite: Federal – power is		Core resources: Shared lessons on One-Drive

		4. Since 1997, major constitutional reforms have included devolution to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland; the Human Rights Act (1998); the creation of the Supreme Court (2009); and reforms to the House of Lords and electoral systems, with further changes under the Coalition (2010–15) such as the Fixed-Term Parliaments Act (2011). 5. Debates continue over whether the UK Constitution should become codified and entrenched—possibly with a formal bill of rights—and whether devolution in England should be expanded further to address regional inequality and clarify the role of devolved governments across the UK.	shared between central and regional governments.) 5. Parliamentary Sovereignty: The principle that Parliament is the supreme legal authority in the UK. It can make or change any law, and no Parliament can bind a future one. 6. The Rule of Law: The idea that everyone is subject to the law, including government officials, and laws must be applied fairly. 7. Statute Law: Laws passed by Parliament, which are a key source of the UK Constitution (e.g. the Human Rights Act 1998). 8. Common Law: Law developed by judges through court decisions, especially where no written statute exists. 9. Conventions: Unwritten traditions or practices that are followed by those in power but are not legally enforceable (e.g. the Prime Minister being a Member of the House of Commons). 10. Authoritative Works: Respected legal books or texts that explain		
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			and clarify how the UK Constitution operates (e.g. Erskine May). 11. Treaties: Formal agreements between countries that become part of UK law if approved by Parliament (e.g. EU treaties before Brexit). 12. Devolution :The transfer of powers from the UK Parliament to regional bodies, such as the Scottish Parliament or Welsh Senedd, though ultimate authority remains with Westminster.		
Autumn 2		1. The UK Parliament is made up of two chambers: the elected House of Commons and the unelected House of Lords. MPs are chosen by voters in general elections, while Lords include life peers, hereditary peers, and bishops appointed for their expertise or service. 2. The House of Commons holds key powers such as passing laws, approving taxation, and scrutinising government policy. The House of Lords acts as a revising chamber, improving and delaying legislation,	1. Parliament:The supreme law-making body in the UK, made up of the House of Commons, House of Lords, and the Monarch. It makes laws, scrutinises the government, and represents the public. 2. House of Commons: The elected chamber of Parliament, where 650 MPs represent constituencies. It has the main power to make and pass laws. 3. House of Lords The unelected chamber of Parliament, made up of life		Core resources: Shared lessons on One-Drive

		but cannot block bills permanently, especially financial ones. 3. The legislative process includes several stages—First Reading, Second Reading, Committee Stage, Report Stage, and Third Reading—followed by approval from both Houses and Royal Assent. The Salisbury Convention limits the Lords from opposing manifesto-backed bills from the elected government. 4. Parliament interacts with the Executive through mechanisms like ministerial question time (including Prime Minister's Questions), select committees that investigate government actions, and contributions from backbenchers who can raise issues and challenge policy under parliamentary privilege. 5. Debates about the balance of power between the Commons and Lords focus on democratic legitimacy, with the Commons having final say due to its elected status, while the Lords provides valuable expertise and scrutiny, especially in areas requiring detailed knowledge.	peers, hereditary peers, and bishops. It revises laws, suggests amendments, and holds the government to account. 4. Confidence and Supply An agreement where a smaller party agrees to support the government in key votes, like the budget and confidence votes, without forming a full coalition. 5. Salisbury Convention A constitutional convention where the House of Lords agrees not to block legislation that was promised in the government's election manifesto. 6. Parliamentary Privilege The right of MPs and Lords to speak freely in Parliament without risk of being sued or prosecuted, allowing open debate and scrutiny. 7. Legislative Bills Proposals for new laws or changes to existing laws. They must go through several stages in Parliament before becoming law.		
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